

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

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SUBJECT: NOVA SCOTIA SCALLOP FISHERMEN

1. A DISPUTE HAS BROKEN OUT BETWEEN NOVA SCOTIA SCALLOP FISHERMEN AND THE FISH PROCESSING COMPANIES OVER SEASON CATCH QUOTAS. UNTIL IT EXPIRED MAR 15, THERE WAS A GOC FISHERIES REGULATION LIMITING CATCH PER VESSEL TO 30,000 LBS PER TRIP AND 180,000 LBS EACH FOUR-MONTH PERIOD. ALTHOUGH THIS REGULATION IS NO LONGER IN FORCE AND VESSELS ARE NOW FREE TO TAKE AS MANY SCALLOPS FROM GEORGES BANK AS THEY ARE CAPABLE OF CATCHING, THE FISHERMEN DO NOT WANT TO DO SO. THEY CLAIM THAT THIS WOULD PUT TOO GREAT PRESSURE ON STOCKS AND LEAD TO THEIR DEPLETION.
2. NS FISH PROCESSING COMPANIES OPPOSE THE FISHERMEN BECAUSE THE NS FISHERMEN ARE FISHING THE SAME GROUNDS (GEORGES BANK) AS THE AMERICANS AND THE LATTER ARE UNRESTRICTED. ON MAR 22, AT MEETING OF MORE THAN 350 NS SOUTH SHORE SCALLOP FISHERMEN, ONLY FOUR VOTED AGAINST A PROPOSAL TO REFUSE TO SAIL TO THE SCALLOP GROUNDS UNTIL FEDERAL QUOTAS WERE REINSTATED. CAPTAINS AND CREWS OF SEVERAL COMPANY-OWNED VESSELS HAVE BEEN

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WARNED BY THE PROCESSING COMPANIES THAT THEY WILL BE FIRED IMMEDIATELY IF THEY FAIL TO FISH.

3. A GOC FISHERIES DEPT INFORMANT TOLD REPORTING OFFICER THAT DISPUTE HAS LITTLE IF ANYTHING TO DO WITH CANADA-US BOUNDARY QUESTION. IT IS HIS BELIEF THAT FISHERMEN ARE NOT REALLY AS MUCH CONCERNED ABOUT THE SURVIVAL

OF SCALLOP STOCKS AS THEY ARE ABOUT THE REINSTATEMENT OF A REGULATION UNDER WHICH THEY COULD FILL THEIR QUOTA (AND MAKE A GOOD LIVING DOING SO) IN THREE MONTHS AND TAKE THE FOURTH MONTH OF THE QUOTA PERIOD AS A HOLIDAY. ALTHOUGH THERE IS PRESS REPORT THAT FEDERAL DIRECTOR GENERAL OF MARITIMES FISHERIES IS SEEKING REINSTATEMENT OF QUOTAS, INFORMANT DISPUTED ACCURACY OF THIS REPORT. HE SAID NO OFFICIAL APPROACH MADE TO OTTAWA ON THIS, AND IT IS BY NO MEANS CERTAIN THAT ANY SUCH APPROACH WILL BE MADE.

4. INFORMANT MADE PASSING MENTION OF CONCERN ABOUT BUILD-UP OF AMERICAN FISHING EFFORT ON GEORGES BANK BUT SAID HE HAD HAD NO WORD ON A NEW CANADA-US INTERIM FISHERIES MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT LIKE THE ONE WHICH EXPIRED DEC 31.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: WOULD APPRECIATE INFO ON WHETHER GOC HAS MADE ANY REPRESENTATIONS TO USG ON INCREASED US FISHING EFFORT ON GEORGES BANK AND WHETHER NEW CANADA-US FISHERIES MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT IS CONTEMPLATED.

MOORE

NOTE BY OC/T: TELEGRAM DELAYED IN TRANSMISSION.
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